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## **Minority Businesses Helping to Rebuild the Gulf**

*Investment Conference focuses on economic development and recovery*

NEW ORLEANS, LA—Minority business owners looking for business investment opportunities in the Gulf Coast region will be attending the Louisiana Business Investment Conference, March 20 – 21, in New Orleans, Louisiana. Hosted by the Minority Business Development Agency (MBDA) of the U.S. Department of Commerce, the Investment Conference will provide briefings from senior federal, state and local government officials, as well as from local business leaders and industry groups. Over thirty minority-owned firms from around the country are sending key decision makers to the Investment Conference.

“As a community development agency, we look forward to learning about available opportunities that fit the investment strategy of the companies that we represent to create a win-win,” said Mr. Vince Elmore, an advisor to the Hampton Road Ventures, LLC. “We fund projects and collaborate with public and private partners with like minded missions around the country to assist in developing communities.”

Like Virginia-based Hampton Road Ventures, other minority businesses look to offer their expertise to help rebuild the region. “I want to expand the building material market to New Orleans,” said Mr. Thound Zhou, eastern regional manager of the Shanghai Construction Group America. “At the end of the month, we will have building materials show at the Superdome for local suppliers.”

“I am here to determine how to best channel my resources and energies into an enterprise that will further the goals of my company and be beneficial for the Gulf region,” said Mr. George Clair, President of Laurence, Scott & Electromotors, Inc.”

Conference attendees will learn about Gulf opportunities from officials such as Executive Director Donna Addkison of New Orleans Mayor’s Office of Planning & Development, Executive Director Andy Kopplin of the Louisiana Recovery Authority, and Federal Regional Coordinator Donna Gambrell.

Workshop panels will highlight the economic development and recovery plans for Louisiana and the Gulf Opportunity Zone legislation and tax credits. Conference Participants will also tour of the Port of New Orleans and the commercial corridors.

“MBDA is committed to help rebuild the Gulf by connecting financially sound minority businesses with a proven track record to business investment opportunities” said MBDA National Director, Ronald N. Langston, the federal government’s leading expert on minority business development. “We want to foster local and national partnerships between minority businesses because together they will build minority communities through the creation of jobs and a viable economy.”

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### **About the Minority Business Development Agency, U.S. Department of Commerce**

Since 1971, the Minority Business Development Agency of the U.S. Department of Commerce is the only federal agency created specifically to foster the establishment and growth minority-owned businesses in America. MBDA is an entrepreneurially focused and innovative organization committed to wealth creation in minority communities. Guided by its mission, MBDA actively promotes the growth and competitiveness of large, medium and small minority business enterprises.